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New Fisheries Leadership School in Session

“Almost all Great Lakes fisheries issues involve stakeholders weighing in on management options,” said Brian Miller, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant associate director. “Through the Great Lakes Sea Grant Fisheries Leadership Institute we hope to provide emerging citizen fishery leaders the fundamental background in science and ecology necessary to make educated choices related to fisheries management.”

The new institute will operate on a regional, lake and state level to help foster the next generation of fisheries leaders. In addition to members of sport-fishing associations, commercial fishermen and charter captains, participants in this program may include representatives from environmental non-profit governmental organizations and tribes. They are nominated by their member organization and approved by a selection committee.

“We hope to create an atmosphere that provides effective communication between fisheries organizations and Great Lakes biologists,” said Chad Dolan, IISG fisheries extension specialist.

The Great Lakes Fisheries Leadership Institute is a partnership of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, state departments of natural resources and environmental protection agencies and others. These partners, along with Great Lakes Sea Grant programs, will help plan and teach the institute sessions.

“We are expecting to learn from these participants as they learn from us,” said Dolan, who is developing part of the curriculum. In upcoming sessions, participants will acquire basic knowledge of fish biology, food webs, aquatic nuisance species and the effects of contaminants on Great Lakes fish. They will receive a certificate after completing the program.

The first session for fishery leaders in Illinois and Indiana will be Friday, July 11, 2003 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Groups interested in sending a representative should contact Chad Dolan at (217) 557-1406 or email CDOLAN@dnrmail.state.il.us.

Funding for the institute is provided by the Great Lakes Sea Grant Network, the National Sea Grant College Program, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Department of Commerce.

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The Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant College Program is one of 30 National Sea Grant College Programs. Created by Congress in 1966, Sea Grant combines university, government, business and industry expertise to address coastal and Great Lakes needs. Funding is provided by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U. S. Department of Commerce, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Purdue University at West Lafayette, Indiana.